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Aide denies plot against Nicaragua

Associated Press

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras — U.S. Ambassador John D. Negroponte yesterday denied a report in Newsweek magazine that the United States is sponsoring a covert military operation aimed at overthrowing Nicaragua's leftist government.

"My country only is interested in achieving the pacification of Central America," Negroponte told the Honduran government television service.

The New York Times, however, reported from Washington yesterday that senior Reagan administration officials had admitted that the CIA is providing money and military equipment to paramilitary groups of Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras for hit-and-run raids into Nicaragua.

The officials said the purpose was to harass but not to overthrow the Nicaraguan government," according to the Times.

The Newsweek report, in the issue dated Nov. 8, said that the military operations at first had been aimed at restricting the flow of arms to El Salvador but that they had developed under Negroponte's direction into an attempt to harass and undermine the Nicaraguan government.

"That article has many errors," Negroponte said. "I have the impression that it was written by someone who is not in favor of our policies here in Honduras and in Central America.

"As for me personally, I have maintained a policy of support for the pacifist plan of the Honduran government. I also have managed to collaborate with the programs of development and of moderate military aid to Honduras, in agreement to what was established by the official sector of this country."